



Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Sunday, August 30, 2020

Dear Lake Toxaway UMC Family and Community,

I usually focus on the Gospel lesson each week in preparation and sermons. I remember my homiletics professors stressing the Gospel held a priority in our worship, teaching, and preaching. I think their counsel has been very helpful to me throughout my time in ministry.

Yet... this week I find myself fascinated once again by the Hebrew Bible story of the burning bush. How does a bush burn but not turn to ashes? My curiosity about how it happened keeps me from hearing what God said to Moses.

When I can listen, I hear two distinct yet simple truths. First, when God sees something that needs to be done, God sends specific people to do it. God was aware of the suffering of the Hebrew slaves and sent Moses to rescue them. Similarly, when God sees people hurting today, God calls on people, people like us, to save them.

The second truth is that even great people like Moses are frightened by trying to do God's work. Moses' question, "Why me?" is very like our response to setting aside our "play money" to feed hungry people, assisting people after a natural disaster like the hurricanes of this week, or trying to befriend someone everyone else ignores or ridicules. I can expand this second point by suggesting you read the rest of Moses' attempts to avoid the job (Exodus 4:1-17).

I, like many children, have a fascination with names and their meanings (my own name means dedicated to Mars or Warrior). I enjoy learning the reasons people are given names. My great interest is in the name God uses to refer to God's self in this encounter with Moses. When Moses asks, "If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,'" and they ask me, "What is his name" what shall I say to them? God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM, or "I AM WHO I WILL BE." In other words, God is "bigger" and "more" than words can ever describe.

In the past few months and weeks, I have questioned God several times. I do not carry the prohibition of a Sunday School tradition that taught me I cannot ask God questions. Rather, I grew up with a healthy teaching tradition which encouraged asking and questioning God with a promise questions would lead me to a deeper relationship and understanding of God.

I am not sure I have come to a deeper understanding of God, but I have grown in a deeper relationship with God. As I ask questions about tragedy, illness, and suffering; as I ask questions about why evil seems to prevail; when I ask questions about how we can continue to be faithful in our worship and service during this pandemic, I learn again of God's ability to transcend all of my questions. I hear God calling me and you to continue in faithfulness and the promise God will give us the words and directions we need to face the future.

Please join me in recognizing we approach God in worship and stand on "holy ground" and God meets us in the burning bush moments of our lives and gives us words to say and strength to sustain us.

Faithfully,

Marcus

**Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Home Worship for Community Worship Service
Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost, August 30, 2020**

8:30 A.M. Livestream link: <https://youtu.be/-kIVM3bSw-E>

PRELUDE

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us arr. Dale Wood

GREETING

Give thanks to God with all your hearts.

We will hold nothing back from our God.

Sing full-throated praises to our God.

We will join in the chorus of thanksgiving for God's abiding love.

Glorify God and that Word we know as Jesus Christ.

We will worship our God with wonder and joy.

HYMN #64

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty

Located on the second to last page of the bulletin - (Printed w/ permission)

INVOCATION

God, you are made known to us in the rustling wind that blows,

in the blazing fire that does not consume,

in the face of the good,

in the deep of the unknown.

We meet you here. We accept your greeting. We welcome your inspiration.

We await the change you have in store for us.

Draw us in to you. Inhabit our spirits. Focus our attention.

Bring us to you – you who are already with us.

Help us to be as you would have us be.

***Through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
here and everywhere, now and always. Amen.***

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Exodus 3:1-15

- 3:1 Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.
- 3:2 There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed.
- 3:3 Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up."
- 3:4 When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am."
- 3:5 Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground."
- 3:6 He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.
- 3:7 Then the LORD said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings,
- 3:8 and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.
- 3:9 The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them.
- 3:10 So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."
- 3:11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"
- 3:12 He said, "I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain."
- 3:13 But Moses said to God, "If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?"
- 3:14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." He said further, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"
- 3:15 God also said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you': This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations.

Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b (read responsively)

105:1 O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples.

105:2 Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works.

105:3 Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

105:4 Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually.

105:5 Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,

105:6 O offspring of his servant Abraham, children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

105:23 Then Israel came to Egypt; Jacob lived as an alien in the land of Ham.

105:24 And the LORD made his people very fruitful, and made them stronger than their foes,

105:25 whose hearts he then turned to hate his people, to deal craftily with his servants.

105:26 He sent his servant Moses, and Aaron whom he had chosen.

105:45b Praise the LORD!

Romans 12:9-21

12:9 Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good;

12:10 Love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor.

12:11 Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.

12:12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.

12:13 Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

12:14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

12:16 Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are.

12:17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.

12:18 If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

12:19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

12:20 No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads."

12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Matthew 16:21-28

- 16:21 From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.
- 16:22 And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you."
- 16:23 But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."
- 16:24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.
- 16:25 For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.
- 16:26 For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?
- 16:27 "For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done.
- 16:28 Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

L: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

P: Thanks be to God!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

(Let us offer our silent confessions.)

God, of Love and Mercy, be with us this day. We have faltered in our service to you. We create divisions between various people; we judge before we listen; we condemn before we make any attempt to understand. Our lives are in turmoil and we confess that we have turned away from you. It is fear and anger that too often surrounds us, and our actions become based on those fears and anger. Slow us down, Lord. Give us hearts overflowing with grace and compassion. Help us to mirror Jesus who loved and healed others who were rejected. Remind us that we are called to be strong voices of hope for those who feel alienated and lost; we are called to be a home to strangers; to quench thirst and to give nourishment; to welcome and bring words of hope. Forgive us when we have forgotten and failed in these things. In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Christ calls each of us into lives of service and hope. He equips us for these ministries and places us on the pathways of peace. Rejoice! You are called by God's Son and blessed by Him. AMEN.

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God. AMEN.

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH (The Apostles' Creed)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord:

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, dead, and buried;

the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven,

and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;

from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

GLORIA PATRI (UMH #70)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

OFFERING

As God has so richly blessed us, let us return a portion of these blessings to God, asking that these gifts may be used in service to others through the ministries and mission of this church. Let us receive our morning offering.

<https://www.wnccumc.org/online-donations-to-churches>

OFFERTORY

Meditation on "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" Charles Callahan

DOXOLOGY

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Lord of all mercy and compassion, bless these gifts lovingly offered and all the people here. Help us to use these gifts for ministries of hope through our church and into our community, nation and world. AMEN.

PASTORAL PRAYER AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #399

Take My Life, and Let It Be

Located on the last page of the bulletin - (Printed w/ permission)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Praise His Name in the Dance Douglas E. Wagner

Pastor: Marcus Dodson: 828-553-0282, marcus61dodson@gmail.com

Organist: Charlie Steele: cwsorgan@comporium.net

Church Administrator: Saunders Grommesh, 469-569-2314, administrator@laketoxawayumc.org

Lay Leaders: Barbara Kline: 828-862-5585 and Paula Markert: 828-553-9434

Audio/Visual for Livestream Chair: Andy Harvill

Liturgist: Carole Guffey

Announcements

Flowers on the altar are in memory of Susan Bagwell given by her family.

We express our deep appreciation to Sarah Catherine Hook for her singing in worship today.

We extend our Christian concern & love to the families of Bette Conningsby & Mark Freeman.

Please pray for Andy Marshall as he is at Mission and awaiting surgery.

Will you host a Home Church Service?

If you have an interest in hosting LTUMC Home Church service of a total of 10 inside or up to 25 on a covered outside porch with 6' social distancing ability please contact Marcus at (828) 553-0282 or marcus61@gmail.com. We are having the Sunday service at 8:30 AM for the Livestream. You may host a Livestream Home Church at 8:30 or watch the recorded YouTube service at 11:00 AM or later.

Mentors needed for Scholarship Recipients

We have seven new student scholarship recipients this year and would like to match them with members of our congregation so you might send them cards, e-mails, gift cards, prayers & support. Please contact Cathie Fussell at linguafrog@gmail.com or 910-572-2167 to learn more about the students and how you can match with one.

New Student Prayer Bookmarks

We have new prayer bookmarks listing all students' names. Please contact Saunders Grommesh at administrator@laketoxawayumc.org or 469-569-2314 (cell) to have a copy of the bookmark which includes a historical prayer for the students.

64 Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty

1. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!
 2. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! All the saints a - dore thee,
 3. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Though the dark-ness hide thee,
 4. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!

Ear - ly in the morn - ing our song shall rise to thee.
 cast - ing down their gold - en crowns a - round the glass - y sea;
 though the eye of sin - ful man thy glo - ry may not see,
 All thy works shall praise thy name, in earth and sky and sea.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Mer - ci - ful and might - y,
 cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim fall - ing down be - fore thee,
 on - ly thou art ho - ly; there is none be - side thee,
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Mer - ci - ful and might - y,

God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!
 which wert, and art, and ev - er - more shalt be.
 per - fect in power, in love and pur - i - ty.
 God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty.

WORDS: Reginald Heber, 1826 (Rev. 4:8-11)
 MUSIC: John B. Dykes, 1861

NICAEA
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399 Take My Life, and Let It Be

1. Take my life, and let it be con - se - cra - ted,
 2. Take my voice, and let me sing al - ways, on - ly,
 3. Take my will, and make it thine; it shall be no

Lord, to thee. Take my mo - ments and my days;
 for my King. Take my lips, and let them be
 long - er mine. Take my heart, it is thine own;

let them flow in cease - less praise. Take my hands, and
 filled with mes - sag - es from thee. Take my sil - ver
 it shall be thy roy - al throne. Take my love, my

let them move at the im - pulse of thy love.
 and my gold; not a mite would I with - hold.
 Lord, I pour at thy feet its trea - sure - store.

Take my feet, and let them be swift and beau - ti - ful for thee.
 Take my in - tel - lect, and use ev - ery power as thou shalt choose.
 Take my-self, and I will be ev - er, on - ly, all for thee.

WORDS: Frances R. Havergal, 1873 (Rom. 12:1)
 MUSIC: Louis J. F. Hérold, 1839; arr. by George Kingsley, 1839

MESSIAH
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